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LB 1003

public that we were expanding government and at that point in time I thought, you know, maybe less is more. And so I spoke to some of the other members of the Legislature who have been involved in the discussion and said, what do you think about the idea of reducing the board to five members? Instead of the current seven or the expanded eight in the Beutler amendment, what if we went to five? Now the reason for five is because I heard a lot of discussion saying you want an uneven number in order to facilitate the voting. I also heard that the rurals were concerned about losing their voice about their resources, and I think that's a legitimate concern and, yet, we've already approved an amendment that says that three of the members on the board will be farmers or reside on a farm. And so that would leave, actually, by dividing up the five members, one member from Lancaster County, one member from Douglas County, the most populous counties in the state, and three to be divided amongst the rural counties. Now the boundaries that have been written up into the amendment somewhat follow the current jurisdictions. They combine districts together. How would it work? Well, it would work through attrition. No one is forced off of the board. In fact, what they would do is they would serve out their term until it expires and at that point in time they would step down, and through that process we would reach the goal of those five members. I think it achieves the goal...

SENATOR CUDABACK: (Gavel)

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. It achieves the goal of a more closer representation of one man, one vote; it doesn't expand the size of our government; and, in fact, it gives the rurals a stronger vote on the current board and that's been a concern. What I was hearing from them is they don't feel that they've been protected in the current system. I have spoken to a number of people on both sides. I...I'm going to let them speak for themselves. I don't want to put words in their mouth, but it sounds like they're intrigued by the idea and want to discuss it and perhaps we may find the solution here this morning. As soon as the amendment comes down, we can introduce it and, if the body agrees, we may be able to get past this whole section of the bill and get on with other business. Thank you.